on 01.11.1999. Before declaration as Nidhis these companies are non-banking financial companies and have to comply with the directions of Reserve Bank of India. Most of these companies have violated the directions of Reserve Bank of India in respect of acceptance of deposits and liquidity ratio. The Reserve Bank of India is conducting inspection of all these companies individually to find out the eligibility of these companies for nidhi status. On receipt of Reserve Bank of India's report in respect of each case, the applications of these companies would be processed. As on 31.01.2000, 89 applications were pending with the department.

Dignity of the Office of Judges

1323. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an additional sessions Judge of Mumbai is found involved in the collection of ransom;

(b) whether there are any more such cases or incidences which have come to the notice of the Government; and

(c) if so, what action Government propose to take to improve the dignity of the office of the Judges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) According to information received from the Registry, High Court (Appellate Side), Bombay, a case has been registered u/s 387 and 120B of the Indian Penal Code r/w 3(l)(ii)(2) of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crimes Act against one Additional Sessions Judge.

(b) No other such case has come to the notice of the Government.

(c) Does not arise.

Posts of judges lying vacant in Supreme Court and High Courts

†1324. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of posts of judges lying vacant in Supreme Court and different High Courts of the States;

(b) whether Government have taken any action to fill up the vacant posts of the judges; and

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) As on 1.3.2000, the vacancy position in respect of judges in the Supreme Court of India and the High Court was as follows:

Supreme Court of India	—	3
High Courts	—	159

(b) and (c) The filling up of vacancies in the Supreme Court of India and the High Courts is a consultative process among the Constitutional authorities. While every effort is made to fill up the existing vacancies expeditiously, vacancies do keep on arising on account of retirement, resignation or elevation of Judges.

Acquisition of land tor Super Highway Project

1325. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the status of implementation of North-South and East-West Highway corridors as announced by the Government indicating details of the estimated costs and time-frame for implementation, region-wise;

(b) whether land acquisition for this purpose has been completed; if not, the status of acquisition; and

(c) the plans for rehabilitation of the evicted people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Status of implementation of 21 sections identified on North-South and East-West Corridor project, indicating details of estimated costs and time frame is at Annexure. *[See* Appendix 189, Annexure No.]

(b) No land acquisition is required for these projects.

(c) Does not arise.

Improvement of road link to Somnath

1326. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:
SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state: